

Icebreakers

What kind of family do you come from? Large? Small? Close? Distant?

When you think of family, what comes to mind?

The Second Main Thing: Loving the Family

Read **John 13:34-35**. Jesus calls this a new command. Since the Old Testament already teaches us to love other people, why is this new command needed?

Jesus says if his disciples love one another it will prove to the world they are his followers? Is that still true today? What do you think?

Read **John 17**. Make a list as a group. What things are most important to Jesus as he prays this final prayer before going to the cross?

Clearly, Jesus seems to be connecting the glory of God with the unity of believers. We learned on Sunday that for Jesus, the unity of the family was of second importance. If that's so, why does the church have such a long history of conflict?

Have you ever been through a church conflict? How did that affect you?





Read 1 Corinthians 12. What part of that chapter stands out to you today?

On Sunday, I shared a diagram illustrating how the Holy Spirit works *through* individuals for the sake of the family of believers. Specifically, I claimed that the primary way we experience the Spirit is through those relationships. What did/do you think of that?

Can a person be a Christian without being part of a church? Why or Why not?

Take it Home

Ways to prioritize the family:

-  Attend worship gatherings.
-  Give time and money.
-  Join a Community Group.
-  Become a member.

How are you doing at prioritizing the family of believers?

Our Membership Covenant

GOD IS MY AIR:

In every aspect of my life, God comes first. His Word is my only authority. His Son is my only Salvation. His glory is my greatest desire. I give him the first of my every opportunity. Matt 22:37-38 (Gen 2:7 :: Acts 17:28-31)

Specifically, I have given my life over to Jesus as my Savior and Lord, I have followed him in the waters of baptism. I will submit my life to the mandates of the Bible, stand up for God's honor, and invest the first portion of my time, talent and treasures in the work of his Kingdom.

I AM GOD'S EARTH:

God is creating me. I started as dust, but I'm becoming like Jesus. I rejoice in trials and hardships because Christ suffered for me, and I am a living sacrifice transformed by the truths of God. Rom 8:29 (Rom 12:1-2 :: Gen 1:27, 2:7 :: 2 Cor 4:7-10)

Specifically, I will pursue opportunities for spiritual growth. I will root out sin in my life through regular self-examination and confession of sin both to God and to accountability partners, and in all areas of uncertainty, I will submit first to the clear teaching of the Bible, then to the leaders God has placed over me, and finally, after prayer, to my own conscience.

GOD'S FAMILY FUELS MY FIRE:

The Spirit dwells in me but his power is revealed in community. I intentionally prioritize Christian relationships because I have something to give and something to receive. Matt 22:39-40 (Acts 2:1-4 :: Gal 6:10 :: 1 Th 5:19 :: Eph 4)

Specifically, I affirm the presence of the Holy Spirit in my life and heed the guidance he gives through the counsel of others in this church. I will view this community as my spiritual family and offer my time, talent, and treasure here before serving or giving elsewhere. I will prioritize the weekly gatherings for worship and join a Community Group. I will pray for and support my leaders, love my fellow believers, and vigorously defend the unity of this church.

THE WORLD NEEDS MY WATER:

I have the Living Water in me. Infinite refreshment is mine in Christ, and I unlock it in me when I give it to others. I eagerly risk embarrassment to offer others the Living Water of Jesus. Matt 28:19-20 (Prov 11:25 :: John 4:1-41 :: Matt 10:42)

Specifically, I employ everything I am and everything I have for the benefit of others beginning in this church and extending to the world around me. To help others find full life in Christ, I will work to serve them, befriend them, share my faith with them, invite them to join me in this church, and help them know the gospel so they too can experience the life I have been given. I will rely on God to refresh me as I strive to refresh others.

